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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/658,784	09/11/2000	Ivo Raaijmakers	ASMEX.236A	4439
20995	7590	09/02/2004	EXAMINER	
KNOBBE MARTENS OLSON & BEAR LLP			ZERVIGON, RUDY	
2040 MAIN STREET			ART UNIT	
FOURTEENTH FLOOR			PAPER NUMBER	
IRVINE, CA 92614			1763	

DATE MAILED: 09/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



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**BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES**

Application Number: 09/658,784
Filing Date: September 11, 2000
Appellant(s): RAAIJMAKERS ET AL.

Rabiner N. Narula
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

MAILED
SEP 02 2004
GROUP 1700

This is in response to the appeal brief filed June 17, 2004.

(1) *Real Party in Interest*

A statement identifying the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) *Related Appeals and Interferences*

A statement identifying the related appeals and interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision in the pending appeal is contained in the brief.

(3) *Status of Claims*

The statement of the status of the claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) *Status of Amendments After Final*

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is incorrect.

The amendment after final rejection filed on November 13, 2003 has been entered.

The amendment after final rejection filed on June 17, 2004 has not been entered.

(5) *Summary of Invention*

The summary of invention contained in the brief is correct.

(6) *Issues*

The appellant's statement of the issues in the brief is correct.

(7) *Grouping of Claims*

The Examiner agrees with Applicant's grouping of claims.

(8) *Claims Appealed*

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(9) Prior Art of Record

6,234,107	Tanaka, Keiichi et al.	5-2001
6,280,134	Nering, Eric A.	8-2001
JP06-275703	Kondo	9-1994
5,223,001	Saeki, Hiroaki	6-1993
5,071,460	Fujiura, Kazuo et al.	12-1991

(10) Grounds of Rejection

The following grounds of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claims 61, 67, 103, and 110 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tanaka (USPat. 6,234,107). This rejection is set forth in a prior Office Action, mailed on August 13, 2003.

Claims 107-109 and 113-116 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka (USPat. 6,234,107) in view of Nering, Eric A. (USPat. 6,280,134). This rejection is set forth in a prior Office Action, mailed on August 13, 2003.

Claims 104, 105, 111, and 112 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al (USPat. 6,234,107) in view of Kondo et al (JP06-275703). This rejection is set forth in a prior Office Action, mailed on August 13, 2003.

Claim 106 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al (USPat. 6,234,107) in view of Saeki (USPat. 5,223,001) and Fujiura et al (USPat. 5,071,460). This rejection is set forth in a prior Office Action, mailed on August 13, 2003.

(11) Response to Argument

Applicant states:

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“

The first port, in turn, communicates between the load lock and the substrate handling chamber, which in turn communicates with at least one process chamber.

“

In response, the Examiner cites that although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. (See MPEP § 2145, § 2111 - § 2116.01; *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *Constant v. Advanced Micro-Devices, Inc.*, 848 F.2d 1560, 1571-72, 7 USPQ2d 1057, 1064-1065 (Fed. Cir.), cert. denied, 488 U.S. 892 (1988); *Ex parte McCullough*, 7 USPQ2d 1889, 1891 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987).

Further, Applicant's position is confusing. Does Applicant cite that Applicant's first port communicate between the load lock chamber, the substrate handling chamber, and the at least one process chamber? Or does Applicant cite that Applicant's first port communicate between the load lock chamber and the substrate handling chamber, and that the substrate handling chamber communicates with at least one process chamber?

Regardless, nowhere in the body of any claim requirements does Applicant require that the first port “communicates” as discussed in either of the above interpretations:

Appealed Claim 61:

“

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a substrate handling chamber selectively communicating with the load lock chamber through the first port; and at least one process chamber selectively communicating with the substrate handling chamber, wherein the first port is located in the upper portion.

“

Appealed Claim 67:

“

a substrate handling chamber selectively communicating with the load lock chamber through the first port; and at least one process chamber selectively communicating with the substrate handling chamber, wherein said first port opens into said upper portion and said second port opens into said lower portion.

“

It is noted that Tanaka et al (USPat. 6,234,107) teaches at least one process chamber (1-3, Figure 1; column 3, lines 20-38) selectively communicating with the substrate handling chamber (16, Figure 1,6). That chambers 1-3 and 16 in Figure 1 “communicate selectively” is demonstrated by the plural processing paths through plural ports (14, 15, 10, 11, 5-7; Figure 1).

The context of the claims are given the broadest possible interpretation:

Communicating:

4. *intransitive verb* have common access: to be connected or provide access to each other¹

¹ http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary_/communicating.html

Applicant states:

“

In contrast, the recited arrangement of Claims 61 and 67 is capable of loading the wafer at a lower level, raising the wafer into the upper portion and thereby sealing the wafer in a smaller, more controllable environment before transferring the wafer into the processing environment from the upper portion. This sequence is not possible with the structure taught by Tanaka. Moreover, neither Tanaka nor any other reference of record teaches or suggests modifying the structure of Tanaka to meet the limitations of independent Claims 61 and 67.

“

In response, it is well established that apparatus claims must be structurally distinguished from the prior art (In re Danley, 120 USPQ 528, 531 (CCPA 1959). "Apparatus claims cover what a device is, not what a device does ." (emphasis in original) Hewlett - Packard Co . v. Bausch & Lomb Inc ., 15 USPQ2d 1525, 1528 (Fed. Cir. 1990), MPEP – 2114). Further, a claim containing a “recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus” if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. *Exparte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987).

The Examiner asserts, contrary to Applicant’s position, that Tanaka et al (USPat. 6,234,107) is capable of performing Applicant’s intended use amounting to, as Applicant suggests as a “sequence”. Per Tanaka’s plural processing paths through plural ports (14, 15, 10, 11, 5-7;

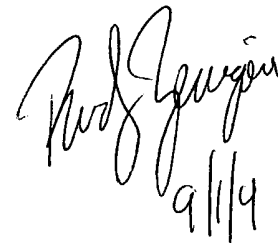
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Figure 1) it is acceptable to consider Tanaka's processing as bi-directional due to the lack of exterior ports (26, 27; Figure 1) other than those interfacing cassette chambers 20, 21; Figure 1.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

Rudy Zervigon
Examiner
Art Unit 1763



9/1/04


Rudy Zervigon
September 1, 2004

Conferees
Greg Mills (SPE 1763)
Glenn Caldarola (SPE 1764)
Rudy Zervigon (Examiner Art Unit 1763)

Knobbe Martens Olson & Bear LLP
620 Newport Center Drive
Sixteenth Floor
Newport Beach, CA 92660



Glenn Caldarola
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700



GREGORY MILLS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700